

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

DIVISION OF HOUSING AND TOWN
PLANNING

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 1923

*Mass. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE : Division of
housing and town planning.*



STATE HOUSE BOSTON
SEP 18 1924
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING.
MASS. OFFICIALS

RICHARD K. CONANT, *Commissioner.*

Advisory Board.

ABRAHAM C. RATSCHESKY, BOSTON, *Chairman.*

JEFFREY R. BRACKETT, BOSTON.

GEORGE CROMPTON, WORCESTER.

GEORGE H. McCLEAN, SPRINGFIELD.

MRS. ADA ELIOT SHEFFIELD, CAMBRIDGE.

MRS. MARY P. H. SHERBURNE, BROOKLINE.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF HOUSING AND
TOWN PLANNING.**

PROGRESS IN PLANNING.

Sixty-six active planning boards in Massachusetts; a State Consultant on Housing and Planning; a State Division of Metropolitan Planning; formation of the Metropolitan Boston Planning Federation; ten cities and towns already zoned; twenty-nine more actively at work on zoning; fourteen with comprehensive plans accepted or in preparation; — these are a few of the encouraging things to report this year for Massachusetts.

Intelligent interest in planning is increasing. City and town officials are coming more and more to recognize its value. Largely responsible for this is the direct and forceful appeal of zoning, the success of which is being demonstrated all over the country. Its benefits can be shown in a more orderly arrangement of the physical city, in stabilized real estate values and protected home areas. And here a note of warning might not be amiss. Zoning should not be done hurriedly. Expert advice should be secured and a thorough-going zoning plan should be tied up as far as possible with the comprehensive city plan. Only reasonable zoning can be expected to be upheld by the Courts, — zoning which is in accordance with the State enabling act and which is done wholly to promote, not retard, the general welfare of the community, — not to stop building, but to encourage building in the right place and under the right conditions.

Other outstanding problems which are receiving much attention are metropolitan or regional planning and through traffic ways.

An Act¹ passed by the Legislature this year made possible the formation of a Division of Metropolitan Planning as a part of the Metropolitan District Commission. This division is instructed to "investigate and make recommendations as to transportation service and facilities within the district." Money has been appropriated, the division is at work and great things are expected from this beginning.

In addition to this a federation has been formed of planning boards in the metropolitan district, a voluntary organization intended to promote a regional plan for the district. It will help along the work of the State division as much as possible and will study questions other than transportation, to which alone the State division is confined.

Regional planning has been given a start in the Connecticut Valley, also, with the appointment of a commission² to study and report upon the highways, parks and reservations in the Connecticut Valley District.

¹ Chapter 399, Acts of 1923.

² Chapter 69, Resolves, 1923.

With the appointment of a State Consultant on Housing and Planning is successfully concluded a long campaign for a field worker in this division. Charged with the duties of encouraging the creation of local planning boards and of furnishing information and suggestions to planning boards and to city and town governments, the need of a field worker has long been felt by the department. The need has now been filled and Mr. Edward T. Hartman has been at work since May as State Consultant. Seventy conferences have been held with representatives of forty-four planning boards. In twenty-two cases these conferences were with boards in session. Visits have been made and conferences held in eight places where boards do not exist or are inactive. Thirteen new boards have been established this year. In addition to his work with the planning boards Mr. Hartman has given four radio talks and has written many articles for publication as part of a much needed educational work.

The department has continued its policy of co-operating with the Massachusetts Federation of Planning Boards in arranging the State Conference and in the preparation and distribution of bulletins. Two bulletins were published this year, one on billboard regulation in Massachusetts and elsewhere and the other a review of activities and tendencies in town planning in Massachusetts.

The State Conference of planning boards was held this year in Springfield, about one hundred members, representing twenty-six planning boards, attending. The Conference was well worth while, discussion at the afternoon session on Thursday being on methods of securing enforcement of the city plan by keeping buildings out of the beds of mapped streets. The evening session was devoted to reports from the Division of Metropolitan Planning, the Metropolitan Boston Planning Federation, the newly appointed Connecticut Valley Park Commission and reports of local planning boards. Encouraging progress was reported in many lines of activity, zoning taking the lead in every case. At the morning session on Friday were given reports of the billboard committee, the zoning committee and the State Consultant on Housing and Planning. An invitation was extended to the Conference to hold its next meeting in Worcester where zoning and a comprehensive plan are well under way.

This year for the first time one of the department news letters was devoted wholly to planning items and similar items appeared occasionally in other news letters of the department. Much appreciation of this news letter was expressed and the experiment will be repeated from time to time. The planning boards are urged to assist this work by sending in special items of news and clippings from newspapers to the division.

ZONING.

The following shows what has been accomplished in zoning in Massachusetts since the passage of the enabling act in 1920. Massachusetts stands sixth among the states in the number of places zoned. New Jersey leads with fifty-one; New York is second with thirty; Illinois third with twenty-three; California fourth with seventeen; Ohio fifth with thirteen.¹

Cities and Towns which have been Zoned.

City or Town and Date of Acceptance.

Brockton, November, 1920
 Springfield, December, 1921 (Interim)
 December, 1922 (Final)
 Winthrop, March, 1922
 Brookline, May, 1922
 Milton, July, 1922
 Longmeadow, July, 1922
 North Adams, September, 1922 (Interim)
 Newton, December, 1922
 Worcester, March, 1923 (Interim)
 West Springfield, May, 1923
 Holyoke, September 1923

¹ From figures compiled by the Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

Cities and Towns at work on Zoning.

Arlington, Bedford, Boston, Cambridge, Clinton, Dedham, Fall River, Framingham, Gardner, Haverhill, Lexington, Lynn, Malden, Melrose, Milton, Natick, New Bedford, North Adams, Northampton, Norwood, Quincy, Somerville, Swampscott, Wakefield, Watertown, Wellesley, Winchester, Woburn, Worcester.

Zoning under Consideration.

Gloucester, Holyoke, Lowell, Needham.

The following shows the present status of planning boards in Massachusetts cities and towns:

Active Boards — 66. — Amesbury, Amherst,¹ Arlington, Attleboro, Bedford,¹ Belmont, Boston, Braintree, Brockton, Brookline, Cambridge, Clinton, Dedham, Easthampton, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Framingham, Gloucester, Haverhill, Hingham,¹ Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lexington,¹ Longmeadow,¹ Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Marlborough, Medford, Melrose, Milford, Milton,¹ Natick, Needham,¹ New Bedford, Newton, North Adams, Northampton, Norwood, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Quincy, Reading,¹ Revere, Salem, Somerville, Southbridge, Springfield, Stoneham,¹ Stoughton,¹ Taunton, Wakefield, Walpole,¹ Waltham, Watertown, Webster, Wellesley,¹ Westfield, Weston,¹ West Springfield, Winchester, Winthrop, Woburn, Worcester.

Inactive Boards — 2. — Chicopee and Greenfield.

No Boards — 11. — Adams, Beverly, Chelsea, Danvers, Gardner, Methuen, Newburyport, Northbridge, Peabody, Saugus, Weymouth.

HOUSING EXPERIMENT AT LOWELL.

The Lowell houses are all occupied and there has been a change of ownership in one of the houses. The original purchaser has retained his house in only one case. A statement of the money spent and the money paid back into the State treasury is as follows:—

Appropriation (made in 1917)		\$50,000 00
Expenses:		
Land purchased, 7 acres with room for 40 houses, including also one house standing on lot	\$12,500 00	
Cost of 12 houses	28,128 77	
Improvements	2,626 77	43,255 54
Balance		\$6,744 46
Paid back to treasury in monthly instalments:		
Interest	\$7,106 05	
Principal	11,763 04	\$18,869 09
Principal remaining unpaid Dec. 1, 1923		\$24,911 31

AMESBURY.

The Amesbury board is new but is active in many ways:—

With the Board of Health the problems of town dumps and garbage collection have been discussed and progress made toward bettering conditions.

At the suggestion of the board an article will be inserted in the warrant for the town meeting for acceptance by the town of Chapter 148, section 6, of the General Laws, which provides for fire protection.

Acquisition of land to be used later for a municipal center was recommended and tentative plans for its development are being considered.

Consultation with the Central Fire Station Committee on plans for a new fire station.

Co-operation with the committee appointed to investigate school house conditions.

A street construction program, adequate public buildings and zoning are the most urgent problems for future study.

¹ Towns under 10,000 population.

AMHERST.

At the request of the town the planning board and selectmen have made a joint study for improvement of the common and adjacent streets.

Other problems studied include:— Building lines. Street improvements. Adoption of a building code.

ARLINGTON.

The committee on zoning appointed by the town will make its report at the next annual town meeting.

ATTLEBORO.

Attleboro reports the following accomplishments:— Street widening and extension. Purchase of a new city hall site. Establishment of traffic regulations. Preparation of city maps. Survey of a portion of the city. Appointment of a committee on housing. Consideration of zoning.

BEDFORD.

The planning board and the school board are together working out a plan for improving the school facilities.

The recommendation of the board made last year for the surveying by the county engineer of the Great Road has been complied with.

A temporary by-law for zoning the town was submitted to the town at a special meeting but was rejected. The need of zoning is urged.

BELMONT.

The Belmont report contains the following matters of interest:—

Plans have been made for the development of large undeveloped areas in the town and at the request of the planning board the Board of Survey is preparing a contour map to make further study of this problem more effective.

Belmont has but one public park and five playgrounds. The board recommends acceptance by the town of the park act and the establishment of a park commission. It recommends, also, that a playground and recreation center committee be established consisting of the members of the park commission, a member of the school committee and a member elected by the town.

At the recommendation of the planning board land has been taken by the town for a new playground. Development of this playground is urged.

Building lines have been extensively established and zoning is under consideration.

BOSTON.

The Boston zoning ordinance has been prepared and will be acted upon at the next session of the Legislature.

At the recommendation of the planning board, a bill has been submitted to the Legislature for the construction of a new thoroughfare through the down town section of the city. This is the first step toward a comprehensive thoroughfare plan for the whole city.

Other studies of the board include:— Boston's commercial, industrial and maritime development. Transportation plans. Recreation facilities. Street improvement. Traffic regulation. Investigation of housing conditions, co-operating with the Building Commissioner and the Rent and Housing Commission. Civic center for the Brighton district.

BRAINTREE.

A new building by-law has been drawn up on which the town will vote at its next annual meeting.

Several recommendations for street widening and improvement have been made by the board and public dumps have been recommended for three sections of the town.

BROCKTON.

The board has been at work on amendments to the zoning ordinance and these have been adopted by the city council.

The plan of the board submitted in 1922 for a program of street extension and

street widening through the establishment of certain building lines is again recommended. Action has been taken by the city on a part of this plan but to give complete relief a comprehensive plan should be developed.

BROOKLINE.

The activities of the Brookline planning board during the year include the following:—

Continued study of plans for the improvement of Village Square.

Study of the Coolidge Corner transfer station problem and recommendation of plans for its solution.

Plans for the taking of over 1,000 square feet of land at the junction of Pleasant and Beacon streets in an attempt to relieve traffic congestion at this point.

The Board of Selectmen has approved this plan and will submit it to the town for acceptance.

Recommendation for additional playgrounds and improvement of a tract now owned by the town but undeveloped.

Study of the housing situation shows an increase in the construction of dwelling houses which will furnish living quarters, for 622 additional families. A revised building by-law has been adopted by the town and a movement is on foot to amend the zoning by-law to provide one-family districts.

CAMBRIDGE.

Cambridge is at work on zoning, the ordinance having passed the Council and waiting only the signature of the Mayor to become law.

The other big project on which the board is working is a comprehensive thoroughfare plan. Expert services have been secured and the report of the consultant is submitted as a part of the report of the planning board. Maps have been prepared of existing thoroughfares, grades and contours, and relative amounts of street traffic. Former recommendations of the board in regard to widenings and improvements are reviewed and correlated. The more important details are recommended for immediate action, the comprehensive plan to be worked out a little at a time as conditions warrant.

CLINTON.

Clinton is zoning and hopes to have its by-law accepted soon.

In addition to the zoning by-law traffic rules have been prepared and will be voted on by the town at an early date.

The board emphasizes again its desire for more regulation of outdoor advertising and for better lighting of the main business thoroughfare.

DEDHAM.

The zoning by-law proposed for the town of Dedham will be presented for action in April. A comprehensive plan is desired and toward this end much publicity work has been carried on.

Through traffic ways are also occupying the attention of the board and outstanding problems include:—Transportation. Playgrounds. Control of real estate developments.

EASTHAMPTON.

The Easthampton board reports inactivity because of lack of money.

EVERETT.

The Everett planning board is keeping itself informed of the housing situation in its city and reports that 68 dwellings, housing 128 families, have been built during the year as follows:—19 one-family houses; 38 two-family houses; 11 three-family houses.

Through traffic ways are being studied and the one main thoroughfare, Broadway, has been extensively improved.

A special committee on zoning has been established.

FALL RIVER.

The comprehensive plan prepared last year has been accepted by the city, as its official plan.

Zoning is under consideration and the problem of through traffic ways is being studied.

FITCHBURG.

The planning board in Fitchburg is also the Board of Survey. In addition to its Board of Survey work the planning board has tried to stimulate interest in zoning but no definite steps have been taken.

FRAMINGHAM.

The Framingham board has been at work on zoning during this year. Its chief problems, in addition to zoning, are regulation of billboards and the abolition of grade crossings.

GLOUCESTER.

No report filed.

The board was very active in helping to engineer the 300th anniversary celebration held during the Summer.

Zoning is under consideration and problems of property valuation and wider streets are receiving attention.

HAVERHILL.

In Haverhill the planning board is at work on zoning under the direction of an expert who advises and co-operates with the board as occasion requires. A survey and maps have been made of existing conditions.

HINGHAM.

The Hingham board has spent much of its time this year, the first year of its existence, in educating itself along planning lines. It has also sought to do some publicity and educational work in the town.

The board has co-operated with the Board of Survey in considering certain real estate subdivisions.

Recommendations include: — a town map; establishment of building lines; and zoning.

HOLYOKE.

Holyoke has zoned her residence areas. Activity is reported also along the following lines: — Establishment of building lines. Acquisition of a park site of about 100 acres. Study on the problem of through traffic ways.

LAWRENCE.

In Lawrence this year zoning, through traffic and the abolition of grade crossings are the important subjects of study.

LEOMINSTER.

No report filed.

LEXINGTON.

The main work of the planning board this year has been the preparation of a zoning plan. At the close of the year the plan was well under way and sectional hearings were being held.

Another project on which the board has been at work is the securing of voluntary set-back agreements from owners of property along several streets. Four streets are so protected and on three others the work is progressing well, the signatures of about 75 per cent of the owners being already obtained.

LONGMEADOW.

Longmeadow's zoning by-law was adopted in July of 1922 but as no report was filed with this office in 1922 news did not reach us until this year.

The report of the planning board for 1923 includes a report on Laurel Street extension. This project has been started with the acceptance by the town of a

section of the street. A plan for the completion of this work has been made by the board. Conditions are favorable now for immediate securing of the land and the town is urged to take action.

LOWELL.

Lowell's new board was given an appropriation of \$1,000 and its first year has seen much educational work carried on and the board members have spent much time in studying the field and in acquainting themselves with conditions in the city.

Zoning, relief from traffic congestion, and parking facilities have been studied and definite measures for traffic regulation have been submitted to the city government for action.

LYNN.

Zoning and through traffic ways seem to be the big problems in Lynn this year. An appropriation for zoning has been requested.

MALDEN.

An interim zoning ordinance has been passed in Malden. An appropriation has been made and expert services have been secured to prepare a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance.

The billboard ordinance recommended by the planning board has been accepted in Malden.

Recommendations were made for the following improvements: — State Highway to Revere. Extension of certain streets. Change of street names to avoid duplication. Sidewalk improvement. Malden River improvement. Purchase of land for a civic center (to be rented until needed for use).

MARLBOROUGH.

The Marlborough planning board has given consideration to the parking problem, traffic regulation and zoning.

MEDFORD.

The Medford planning board which has been inactive since 1916 was reorganized early in 1923. Already the board has made a place for itself and two of its recommendations for the establishment of building lines have been favorably acted upon by the Board of Aldermen.

Other recommendations include: —

Report made to the City Hall Commission on proposed City Hall site. Accepted by City Hall Commission but not by Board of Aldermen.

Report made at the request of the Board of Aldermen to the Board of Survey for Lewis Street improvement. Recommendation adopted by Board of Aldermen.

Report made at the request of the Mayor on the construction of Governors Avenue.

Work is still being pushed — through conferences between the planning board and the Boston and Maine railroad officials — to secure a suitable new station when the Riverside Avenue grade crossing is eliminated.

The Board of Aldermen has requested the planning board to submit plans for the development of a section of the city now largely unoccupied. The board has requested opportunity to make a contour survey of this section that an intelligent study may be made.

An appropriation for zoning is urged.

MELROSE.

The Melrose board has been working on its zoning ordinance this year, securing the help of High School pupils in the preparation of maps.

Building lines have been established along Wyoming Avenue and Main Street.

MILFORD.

At the 1923 town meeting a by-law establishing a planning board was adopted by a unanimous vote. The first report of the board has not yet been filed.

MILTON.

The planning board in Milton has been in existence a little less than a year. Before the board was established Milton had passed a zoning by-law. Zoning is still a subject for study and work on a general town plan has been started.

NATICK.

As authorized by the town the planning board has made a survey and plan for development of the northeastern section of Natick. This section of Natick is largely undeveloped and acceptance of the plan now would mean a well planned area instead of a haphazard and probably unsatisfactory development. This plan is made on the same scale as those for West Natick and Nebraska Plains which appeared in the 1919 and 1920 reports of the board and can be joined to them to make a complete road plan for the town north of Central Street.

The question of extending Pond Street was referred to the planning board and a plan has been made for development of the whole region affected.

Other matters touched upon in the report include: —

The using of the betterment law in carrying on municipal work.

Modern standards for street widths, grades, curbs and paving.

Better traffic control and use of the safety circle where possible, accompanied by a detailed plan for improving Natick's traffic center.

In its study for the revision of the building regulations the board is trying to work toward a comprehensive zoning plan and requests an appropriation for this work.

NEEDHAM.

The Needham planning board has had a very active first year spending some time studying the town in a general way. The following specific problems have received consideration: — Through traffic ways. Subdivisions of land likely to be opened for development soon. Layout of proposed new streets. Non-connecting and dead-end streets. Restriction of gasoline filling stations in residence areas. Zoning and town maps.

NEW BEDFORD.

The New Bedford planning board was established in January, 1923, and was given an appropriation of \$10,000 with which to work. The board members visited several cities in their study of what was being done by their neighbors in the planning and zoning field. The first move of the board was to secure expert services to make a preliminary survey and program of future work.

A draft of an interim zoning ordinance was submitted to the City Council but has not been acted upon and the board recommends no action on the interim ordinance but immediate working out of the comprehensive zoning plan.

A plan has been presented to the Council, also, for a diagonal street and recommendations for regulations to secure traffic relief, the full report on traffic to be submitted in the near future.

The preliminary survey for a comprehensive plan has been completed.

NEWTON.

Newton reports her city zoned and protected by good building restrictions.

Building lines of from ten to twenty-five feet (on one street thirty-five to forty feet) have been established to date on 16.73 miles of streets.

The most serious outstanding problem of the board is to get action on the comprehensive plan prepared in 1921.

The following, quoted from the planning board's report, indicates in a brief way how the zoning law is working out in Newton: —

"It is interesting to note that of the twenty applications — a very small number for the first year of operation — thirteen have been from a higher to a lower classification, and seven from a lower to a higher. Thirteen of these applications have been refused, four have been granted and three are pending. Of the four changes made, three were from a lower restriction to a higher and only one from a higher to a lower restriction."

NORTH ADAMS.

Work on the comprehensive plan is going on and a progress report is made by the city planning expert engaged by the board. This includes cuts and plans for special improvements and an outline of the work remaining to be done.

Recommendations of the board follow:— Additional appropriation to allow continued work on the city plan. Completion of the city map for assessing and adoption of the Cambridge method. Appointment of a Board of Survey. Furthering of the Petersburg Mountain highway by the city officials. Certain street and sidewalk improvements. Survey and planning of a street paving program.

NORTHAMPTON.

A zoning ordinance has been prepared in Northampton and action is pending. The board reports an unusually large number of dwelling houses built during 1923.

Other matters studied were traffic regulation and street intersection problems.

NORWOOD.

Norwood makes no formal report for 1923 but is working hard to get its comprehensive plan and zoning by-law, prepared a year ago, accepted by the town.

PITTSFIELD.

A planning board was appointed in Pittsfield in September and has begun work on city problems.

PLYMOUTH.

No report filed. The board is known to be active and is at work on plans for improving the street system of Plymouth. The plan is to build new roads which will take the traffic around rather than through the center of the town.

QUINCY.

The Quincy board in its ninth year reports accomplishments in the following lines of activity:— Traffic regulation. Building lines. Street improvement and extension. Progress in zoning.

A Bill for the construction of Pilgrim Parkway has been presented to the Legislature this year and recommendations have been made to the Mayor for re-lighting the business section of Hancock Street; for the improving of Apthorp Street Quarry for community tennis courts; for the extension of Edwin Street and Newbury Avenue.

At the request of the Council a report was made on the acquisition by the city of a certain parcel of land for parking space.

READING.

The planning board of Reading has been reorganized this year and the new board is getting to work. Zoning is being studied and the problem of through traffic ways.

REVERE.

The Revere planning board was reorganized in December and is taking up the study of zoning, housing laws and through traffic ways.

SALEM.

At the request of the Mayor the planning board has made a survey of traffic conditions and certain recommendations concerning parking, traffic signals and traffic regulation. Some of these recommendations have been adopted.

Realizing that this is only a temporary measure of relief the board urges a city plan which will include establishment of building lines and a scientific system of street widening.

The board is working toward comprehensive zoning and a city plan and to this end is collecting as much material and information as possible.

SOMERVILLE.

Somerville is at work on a comprehensive plan, which will include zoning, and a revision of the building laws. The board's report contains recommendations for the establishment of fire districts and the acquisition of additional playground sites.

SOUTHBRIDGE.

Recommendations of the planning board for a recreation field have resulted in a fair start being made toward development. An appropriation to complete this work is recommended.

Recommendations are made also for the following improvements: — The establishment of a town engineering department. Replacement of an old primary school building now unfit for use with a new building. A new building code.

A plan has been drawn up showing a road building program covering many years. This work was done by engineers employed by the chairman of the planning board at no expense to the town.

SPRINGFIELD.

In Springfield this year the big item of news is the acceptance by the City Council of the street and thoroughfare plan. Set-backs are established by the zoning law accepted in January and a comprehensive plan is in progress.

STONEHAM.

Stoneham's outstanding accomplishment this year has been in connection with the rounding of dangerous corners. Zoning and through traffic are under consideration.

STOUGHTON.

No report filed. The finance commission-planning board has given some consideration to problems of school buildings, water and sewerage systems and street improvement.

TAUNTON.

The following matters have occupied the attention of the Taunton planning board this year: — Street layouts referred to the board by the Municipal Council for recommendation. Building lines. Outdoor advertising.

The board recommends acceptance of the Board of Survey act and an appropriation for zoning.

WAKEFIELD.

Wakefield, as always, reports that "it has met with a fine spirit of understanding and co-operation on the part of private citizens, the public press, and especially individual town officials."

There is a great deal — we believe — in the planning board's method of approach and we should suggest that other boards, instead of crying "no support" work to educate their fellow citizens to the value of planning. It may be true that support is refused wholly because of lack of interest and understanding. It may also be true that the planning boards who fail to get sympathy have done nothing worth supporting. Vague and visionary dreamings should give place to definite, practical plans. Then — with proper publicity — support is pretty sure to follow.

The zoning by-law for Wakefield is ready for presentation to the town. A study for a comprehensive plan is being made, also.

The Board of Survey has referred to the planning board for study and report all plans for the subdivisions of land which have come before it.

The planning board and the park department have worked together in outlining a program for park development.

Other subjects acted upon by the board include: — Parking areas. Filling stations. Public dumping. Mosquito elimination. Revision of the building laws. Street improvement. Preparation of five maps: — present use map; contour map; waste land map; zoning; general plan map.

WALPOLE.

Walpole has this year established a fire district for the center of the town where all new buildings or altered buildings must be of second class construction or better.

Plans for Walpole's Bi-centennial are under way. A very attractive memorial park is being planned and a memorial bridge will be dedicated at the celebration.

Building lines are under consideration and recommendations made for the following projects:—Square improvement in South Walpole. Beautifying the railroad station grounds. Establishment of a constructive side-walk program. Adequate signs at entrances to town.

WALTHAM.

Waltham has begun its zoning study, and reports also a mile and one half of established building lines and study of through traffic ways.

WATERTOWN.

Zoning is being studied by a special committee made up of the planning board and others. The zoning by-law is drawn up ready for action by the town.

Watertown is also at work on building lines and through traffic. A committee has been appointed to revise the building laws, the planning board being represented on that committee.

WEBSTER.

Study of the housing situation shows very little improvement during the year but indications are that the Spring will see new homes being built.

Recommendations of the board include:—Adoption of a building code. Employment of at least two firemen on continuous duty. More effective signals at grade crossings or the abolishment of these crossings.

A report made to the board by the Technical Advisory Corporation recommends improvement of the streets and the establishment of a board of survey to control future street layouts, adoption of a zoning system and the preparation of a comprehensive plan to be preceded by the drawing of an accurate town map.

WELLESLEY.

At the request of the town the planning board has begun a comprehensive study of the question of street widening throughout the town. Three main ways have been studied in special detail and plans for taking of necessary land and improvement will be submitted soon.

A zoning by-law is under way.

WESTFIELD.

No report filed.

WESTON.

Progress is reported on the comprehensive town plan for Weston.

WEST SPRINGFIELD.

The West Springfield zoning by-law has been accepted.

Recommendations made to the Board of Survey include the following:—Removal of trees within highway lines. Favorably acted upon by the Selectmen. Curving of certain dangerous street corners.

All applications for permits for gasoline-filling stations have been referred to the planning board, also all property sub-divisions before final action by the Board of Survey.

WINCHESTER.

The Winchester zoning by-law is presented to the town for adoption and work on the comprehensive plan is still going on.

The planning board has been represented at hearings before the selectmen on questions of street acceptance and building lines.

A progress report is made by the planning adviser, this report dealing principally with existing and proposed highways and existing and proposed parks. The data regarding existing conditions is nearly compiled and a few weeks of work should see the completion of the comprehensive plan.

WINTHROP.

A committee to study the question of the housing laws has been formed in Winthrop and will report to the next annual town meeting. The board has been active in getting building lines established and in co-operating with the building inspector in the enforcement of the zoning law.

WOBURN.

A new board was established in the Fall and is taking up the study of zoning of the city.

WORCESTER.

Worcester has passed an interim zoning ordinance. The comprehensive zoning plan has been prepared and action is pending.

